
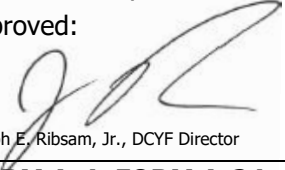


2901 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	
Chapter: Workforce Development	Section: Staff Professional Development
 <p>New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual Policy Directive: 19-28 Effective Date: July 2019 Scheduled Review Date:</p>	<p>Approved:</p>  Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director
Related Statute(s): Related Admin Rule(s): Related Federal Regulation(s):	Related Form(s): FORM A-4, FORM A-24, FORM 2901, FORM 2940, FORM 2941, and FORM 2942 Bridges' Screen(s) and Attachment(s):

The Division for Children, Youth and Families' Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement (BOLQI) has its foundation in the belief that well educated employees deliver better quality, efficient, professional, effective, and proactive services to children and their families. Learning opportunities should increase an employee's competence and morale through professional growth, development, and enhanced job performance. Further, DCYF believes that learning is a critical systemic factor in achieving quality outcomes for children and families. Thus, it must be fully integrated into and aligned with all agency activities. DCYF also recognizes the inextricable link between continuous quality improvement and learning as an organizational development strategy, and therefore strives to be a learning organization. BOLQI will ensure that partnerships (including state and contracted agencies) provide collaboratively designed, innovative, and engaging learning opportunities consistent in supporting best practice and DCYF's Practice Model beliefs.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clarify requirements for all staff and highlight how staff can access available educational and professional development opportunities. This policy guides the actions each staff will follow to ensure compliance with requirements and document acquired knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to be effective in their unique position.

Definitions

"BOLQI" means the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement under DCYF.

"Bridges" means the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS) for case management, information, tracking, and reimbursement used by DCYF.

"Capstone" means a final session of Core Academy that supports the transfer of learning by each graduating staff through the presentation of a completed individual or group project to show their understanding of an identified topic covered in Core Academy.

"Competency-Based" means a learning opportunity designed to assist staff in attaining the knowledge, skills, and ability to perform their assigned job functions.

"Core Academy" means a specific experiential competency-based learning series required of all new direct practice staff. Core Academy course requirements must be completed within the first six (6) months to one (1) year of employment, including all requisite courses, a capstone project, and graduation ceremony. Core Academy courses are open to all existing staff.

"CPS" means the Bureau of Field Services' Child Protective Services under DCYF.

"CWEP" or the **"Child Welfare Education Partnership"** means the contracted DCYF partnership that holds the responsibility for DCYF staff professional development and also supports New Hampshire foster/adoptive parents, relative caregivers, and residential treatment providers by providing opportunities to enhance their skills, knowledge, and abilities through ongoing education. This includes Core Academy and other ongoing learning opportunities for DCYF staff and collaborating partners (Title IV-E eligibility applies).

"DCYF" or the **"Division"** means the Department of Health and Human Services' Division for Children, Youth and Families.

"DCYF Orientation: Our Practice Model" means an event provided by the DCYF Administrators and Director, or designees, which is completed by new staff to orient them to the culture of DCYF and the resources within it.

"DHHS Orientation" means the internal training session required for all new DHHS employees. The DHHS course introduces employees to the philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, role expectations, physical facilities, and the specific skills needed in their functional work setting.

"Direct Practice Staff" means a DCYF staff member that is a Child Protective Service Worker, CPS Supervisor, Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer, Juvenile Probation and Parole Supervisor, SYSC Youth Counselor, SYSC Unit Manager, or SYSC Treatment Coordinator who has direct responsibility for care or case management of children/youth.

"Educational" means learning experiences designed to expand the learner's conceptual grasp and theoretical base of job skills. They may be internal or external in origin and delivery.

"External" means training or education not listed or posted on Bridges, or sponsored by DCYF, CWEP, or DHHS.

"FACES" means the pre-service Foster and Adoptive Care Essentials basic education offered to prospective foster/adoptive and relative caregivers. FACES consists of a 21 hour curricula which designed to promote a better understanding and awareness of the New Hampshire child welfare system and DCYF's work with children and families. FACES is offered through a contract with the CWEP. The primary purpose of FACES is to provide the minimally required pre-service hours for foster parent licensure while simultaneously helping prospective caregivers develop the needed knowledge and skills to be professional caregivers, partners, and team members.

"Internal" means training or education listed or posted on Bridges and/or sponsored or facilitated by the Center of Professional Excellence in Child Welfare, DCYF, or DHHS.

"JJS" means the Bureau of Field Services' Juvenile Justice Services within DCYF.

"Professional Development Task Force" or **"PDTF"** means the workgroup consisting of DCYF's professional development partners' leadership, DCYF training leadership staff, and key stakeholder groups, that seeks to enhance the sharing of resources among DCYF affiliated educational programs, create integrated training and learning opportunities for professional development, and offer a unified message to all audiences.

"Learning Opportunity" means various types of educational experiences, including classroom, online, blended, self-guided, mixed delivery, coaching, mentoring, and experiential course work. It may be delivered internally or externally, and must directly relate to the work situation. Approved learning opportunities are expected to expand awareness of a specific topic, help to foster the development of positive attitudes and behaviors, and emphasize building knowledge and skills.

"Mentoring" means the process of working with an identified experienced employee (Practice Advisor), who has been identified as a mentor, to learn the policies, procedures, best practices, and culture of the Division.

"Ongoing Learning" means continuous education following the first year's requirements for training and working on the job. The specific topics are job-related and determined by the employee and their immediate supervisor using their annual performance evaluations as goals for the upcoming year. In addition, the Division may identify workforce development needs and determine education related to a specific subject. Any job-related academic course work may meet the ongoing learning requirement if approved by the employee's supervisor and BOLQI Training Administrator.

"Practice Advisor" means a staff member of the Division who provides mentoring to a new staff in the same area of practice (Child Protective Services, Juvenile Justice Services, or the Sununu Youth Services Center).

"SYSC" or the **"John H. Sununu Youth Services Center"** means the architecturally secure juvenile treatment facility administered by the DHHS Division for Children, Youth and Families for committed juveniles and detained youth, and for NH youth involved with the NH court system prior to their adjudication.

"Transfer of Learning" is defined as the degree to which individual staff apply and transfer newly acquired knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes to their individual job functions.

Policy

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">I. BOLQI oversees a group of organizational learning staff, contracts, and partnerships that facilitate staff access to an array of learning opportunities.<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. The contractor for staff professional development is the Child Welfare Education Partnership (CWEP).II. DCYF Annual Training Plan<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. BOLQI establishes the agency's annual training plans, including goals and objectives.<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. BOLQI identifies needed curricula, intended audiences, locations, times, dates, estimated costs, and budget allocation sources.2. Through this plan, BOLQI assures that the learning opportunities remain competency-based, linked to outcomes, of high quality, aligned with the Practice Model, and are relevant to current needs.B. The annual planning process includes ongoing consultation with the Professional Development Task Force. |
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- C. The annual training plan is incorporated into the federal Child and Family Services (5-year) Plan and may be found in said plan or the most recent Annual Progress and Services Review (APSR).

III. Professional Development Requirements

A. At a minimum, a new direct practice staff must:

1. Complete DHHS and DCYF designated courses within the first 12 months of employment, including:
 - (a) DCYF Orientation: Our Practice Model;
 - (b) DHHS Orientation;
 - (c) Mentoring; and
 - (d) The Core Academy (for their area of practice);
2. Complete FACEs Orientation and Regulation modules within the first 12 months of employment, if employed for CPS or JJS field services;
 - (a) Timeframes in which courses are offered may be extended for good cause as determined by the employee's Supervisor in consultation with the BOLQI Training Administrator, or designee;
 - (b) Waivers to exclude certain Core Academy courses may be granted based on documented previous work experience and education. See section [XV Waivers](#); and
3. Be assigned a Practice Advisor within their job function. (Examples include but are not limited to a new direct practice staff paired with an experienced staff within their area, a new supervisor paired with an experienced supervisor.)

B. All other new staff working primarily in DCYF:

1. Must at a minimum complete DHHS and DCYF designated courses within the first 12 months of employment, including:
 - (a) DCYF Orientation: Our Practice Model;
 - (b) Basic Bridges; and
 - (c) DHHS Orientation;
2. Should complete FACEs Orientation module within the first 12 months of employment, as applicable to their position;
 - (a) Timeframes in which courses are offered may be extended for good cause as determined by the employee's Supervisor in consultation with the BOLQI Training Administrator, or designee;

- (b) Waivers may be granted based on documented previous work experience and education. See section [XV Waivers](#); and
- 3. May be assigned a Practice Advisor. It is recommended that the Practice Advisor be an assigned staff within their job function when possible.
- C. All full-time direct practice staff must complete 30 hours of ongoing learning each year.
- D. All other DCYF employees must complete 18 hours of ongoing learning each year.
- E. Individual mentoring and observed activities are documented on the appropriate Training Activity and Mentoring Log (Form 2940, Form 2941, or Form 2942) pursuant to policy 2940 Guidelines for Mentoring.
- IV. Internal learning opportunities must be registered for using the Bridges Training module by following the Bridges Training Enrollment Protocols for Staff or the Bridges Supervisor Training Enrollment Protocols for Supervisors, Attorneys, and Program Specialists, including but not limited to:
 - A. Core Academy;
 - B. Supervisory Core Academy;
 - C. Mandatory Training (required by the DHHS Commissioner or DCYF Director); and
 - D. Ongoing learning opportunities listed in Bridges.
- V. External learning opportunities must be applied for via the Form 2901.
 - A. Types of external learning opportunities include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Local or statewide learning opportunities sponsored by community partners;
 - 2. National or statewide conferences;
 - 3. Federally-sponsored trainings; and/or
 - 4. State of New Hampshire Bureau of Education and Training (BET) learning opportunities.
 - B. Applications or online requests for external learning opportunities must be submitted to CWEP at least three (3) weeks prior to the registration's closing date for in-state and eight (8) weeks prior to the registration's closing date for out-of-state.
 - C. Approval is based upon the learning opportunities' correlation to the employee's job duties, professional development plan and goals, availability of funding, and office staffing needs.
 - D. Applications with Supervisor/Administrator approval are otherwise accepted/approved for professional development on a first come, first served basis.
 - E. Early registration is encouraged to ensure space.

VI. Both internal and external learning opportunities require supervisory approval prior to registering in Bridges or through the Form 2901.

VII. Instructors

- A. Non-DCYF Instructors employed via contracted relationships with CWEP are recruited, screened, hired, compensated, and monitored.
- B. Employees of DCYF and related state agencies may be considered as instructors. No additional compensation is available to DCYF and/or DHHS employees who instruct courses, other than for transportation, lodging, and compensatory time for preparation.
- C. Staff is encouraged to recommend potentially qualified instructors to CWEP to become DCYF instructors.
- D. All DCYF instructors will be evaluated and monitored by CWEP. Evaluation feedback is used in instructor development and curriculum enhancement.

VIII. Educational Coordination

- A. All courses and conferences planned and implemented by DCYF staff must be coordinated through CWEP.
- B. The CWEP maintains statistics on each course offering, costs, and staff attendance. CWEP provides an annual report and further reports as necessary.
- C. All courses developed will use a transfer of learning philosophy designed and implemented using the following outline:
 - 1. Learner goals and objectives;
 - 2. Instructional methodology;
 - 3. Learner measurable outcomes;
 - 4. Workshop description;
 - 5. Daily agenda; and
 - 6. Links to digital course materials and/or copies of materials used.

IX. All DCYF evaluation of courses adheres to the following criteria:

- A. Access and ease of registration, attendance monitoring, classification of participants, and participant satisfaction or reaction to the course. Focus groups, questionnaires, and surveys are periodically used as a form of course evaluation;
- B. Quality of learning opportunities is also assessed through a formal monitoring process conducted by DCYF approved staff who possess sufficient knowledge of course content to monitor a selected course;

- C. Knowledge attained is measured through a continuum of methods including, but not limited to, pre- and post-tests, in course review, simulation and observation, and by the quality and content of the Core Academy Capstone presentation; and
 - D. Transfer of Learning is assessed through demonstration of abilities required in the appropriate Training Activity and Mentoring Log (Form 2940, Form 2941, or Form 2942) and through Practice Advisor and Supervisor observations. This may include, but is not limited to, a certification process of observable and demonstrable skills by an expert in that particular skill.
- X. Attendance
- A. For classroom-based courses, participants are required to sign the attendance sheet in order to document their attendance. Failure to sign-in may result in not receiving credit for the course.
 - B. Participants must be present for at least 80% of the session to receive credit for attendance.
 - C. Attendance at all sessions of Core Academy is mandatory for all direct practice staff within the first year of employment.
 - 1. Staff may be waived from one (1) or more required courses based upon prior documented experience or academic coursework within the last seven (7) years.
 - D. Participants are required to complete documentation to assess their knowledge and ensure that transfer of learning has occurred, which may include the completion of pre- and post-tests, a Training Activity and Mentoring Log, Capstone project, or other activities defined by their Supervisor or BOLQI.
 - E. Participants are required to carpool to learning opportunities whenever possible.
 - F. If staff sign-up for a learning opportunity which incurs a cost, and the employee does not attend without being formally excused, that employee may be required to reimburse DCYF for any associated costs including travel and/or lodging.
- XI. Participant Cancellations
- A. Cancellations must be received verbally or in writing from the participant or their Supervisor at least five (5) business days prior to the date of the learning opportunity, unless the participant is sick on the day of the scheduled offering, in which case, the Supervisor must contact the CWEP to inform them.
 - B. A participant who fails to appear at a learning opportunity, or fails to sign the required attendance sheet, and whose attendance has not been canceled, is considered to be unexcused and will not receive credit for participation.
 - C. Any participant who cancels prior to a learning opportunity shall be responsible to contact and cancel any related lodging or travel arrangements, and notify the CWEP. Failure to do so will result in the cost of the learning opportunity becoming the responsibility of the participant and this cost is not eligible for reimbursement.
 - D. Substitutions for excused employees are allowed:

1. The excused employee or supervisory staff must submit the name of the substitute to CWEP within 24 hours' notice; and
2. Transfer of travel or lodging arrangements for substituted staff is the responsibility of the involved staff.

XII. DCYF/CWEP Cancellations

- A. Learning opportunities may be cancelled when the minimum cost-effective participation level will not be met. CWEP notifies participants of cancellation decisions within three (3) working days, if possible.
- B. The CWEP attempts to notify participants as soon as possible when there is a cancellation caused by inclement weather.
 1. Participants are encouraged to call the CWEP if they are unable to determine if a learning opportunity has been cancelled. Participants may also refer to WMUR closure notifications to see if CWEP is identified.
 2. A voice message will be available on the CWEP phone.
 3. Additional notices will be posted on the CWEP website as applicable.
- C. If the CWEP or learning site cannot be reached, staff must use their own judgment regarding weather and road conditions.
 1. If the decision is made to not attend the learning opportunity, the participant or their Supervisor must notify CWEP immediately that they will not be in attendance.
 2. Staff will be responsible for attending said offering at a later date.
- D. If a learning opportunity is postponed, staff will be notified in writing of the make-up time, date, and location.

XIII. Reimbursement

- A. Individual expenses for attending learning opportunities must be kept to a minimum due to the high cost of mileage and lodging.
- B. The following guidelines apply:
 1. Carpooling is required whenever more than one (1) employee from the same location is attending;
 2. Travel related expenses for all Core Academy courses are reimbursed utilizing the employee's bureau's funds through completion of a Payment Voucher Travel Form A-4 signed by the participant's Supervisor;
 - (a) Staff driving to learning opportunities must use their own employee vendor number in lieu of a Social Security number, and the bureau/district appropriation code and core/related District Office job number;

- (b) If other courses are to be attended during the month, staff must wait to submit all mileage and other expenses on one (1) form;
- 3. Ongoing learning will be reimbursed using the Payment Voucher Travel Form A-4 signed by the participant's Supervisor;
 - (a) Staff must use their own employee vendor number provided to him or her by the Fiscal Unit upon hiring, in lieu of a Social Security number;
 - (b) The BOLQI job number and appropriation code will be provided to the staff for use on the Form A-4;
- 4. All staff is encouraged to use a state vehicle to travel to learning opportunities, if available and the staff meets the requirements to operate it; and
- 5. Participants must live and work at least 50 miles from the learning site before overnight lodging is allowed:
 - (a) Overnight stays must have prior supervisory **and** CWEP approval.
 - (b) Employees must submit a finalized hotel receipt to confirm the overnight stay, whether directly billed to the State, or paid for by the employee and showing a zero balance.
- XIV. Certificates of attendance with professional development hours may be issued upon request for successful completion of a learning opportunity offered by DCYF.
- XV. Waivers
 - A. Staff may be granted waivers from attendance of certain Core Academy sessions based on documented previous work-related experience and education.
 - 1. Staff with more than one (1) year of prior DCYF job-related experience obtained within the last seven (7) years are required to complete: the DCYF Orientation: Our Practice Model; and Mentoring. The staff member, however, may qualify for a waiver for portions of the remaining Core Academy courses based on current curricula in comparison to the responsibilities and content of previously held duties.
 - B. Waivers must be requested in writing by the employee's direct Supervisor, approved by the Field Administrator or Bureau Chief as applicable, and forwarded to the CWEP for review.
 - C. Upon review, the CWEP will make a recommendation to the BOLQI Training Administrator or designee, who maintains final authority for approval/denial of waiver requests.
 - D. The staff member, Supervisor, and BOLQI Training Administrator or designee, document all approved waivers in a signed letter to the staff member. A hard copy of all waivers should be maintained by the employee and recorded in the Bridges training record.
- XVI. Professional Development Records

- A. The electronic record is considered the official professional development record. Electronic professional development records are maintained in Bridges and can be accessed via the Bridges Training module.
- B. Digital copies of staff professional development related materials, i.e. certificates of attendance, and waivers are maintained by the CWEP if materials have been submitted.
 - 1. These materials are only maintained while a staff member is employed by DCYF and for one (1) year after an employee has left the Division.
- C. It is the employee's responsibility to maintain all original professional development related documentation.

Procedures

- I. All internal learning opportunities offered to staff are located via the CWEP website by clicking on the Upcoming Professional Development Calendar. Course offerings are listed by topic and date.
- II. Staff must enroll as follows:
 - A. For a CWEP announcement, staff enrolls by using the Bridges application; or
 - B. For external announcements, Form 2901 must be completed and submitted with supervisor approval to CWEP at least three (3) weeks prior to the scheduled learning opportunity.
 - C. Staff planning to stay overnight for an internal learning opportunity as outlined in A above need to complete a Form 2901 with Supervisor approval, including anticipated costs (including mileage and approved anticipated overnight stay per Collective Bargaining rules) and submit Form 2901 to CWEP at least three (3) weeks prior to the scheduled learning opportunity.
- III. Staff is notified of approval via email from CWEP or ODTs. If a request is denied, the staff is notified stating a reason for non-approval.
- IV. Out-of-state travel requires the Director's and Commissioner's approval and may require the approval of the Governor and Council.
 - A. All out-of-state travel requires the Form A-24 be completed and submitted eight (8) weeks prior to the registration deadline.
 - 1. The CWEP prepares the request in conjunction with DCYF and the Fiscal Unit.
 - 2. The Form A-24 can be found on the DHHS Intranet.
 - B. It is the staff's responsibility to make sure the accurate information for the Form A-24 is given to the CWEP in order to complete the Form A-24 properly.
 - C. Assistance is available from CWEP staff or BOLQI.
- V. Learning opportunities may be opened to service providers or others on a limited basis at the discretion of BOLQI, in line with the Annual Training Plan. (See the CWEP website.)
- VI. The CWEP staff must:

- A. Create and distribute learning opportunity/professional development announcements;
 - B. Distribute learning opportunity information from other organizations and agencies to State Office, Central Intake, each District Office, each Itinerant Office, and SYSC;
 - C. Schedule dates and coordinate room usage for meetings and courses;
 - D. Notify participants and presenters of logistical arrangements including reservations for overnight stay when appropriate;
 - E. Establish a digital file for each course which contains copies of materials, instructor guide, and electronic curricula related to the course;
 - F. Prepare an attendance record and evaluation form for each course;
 - G. Review the Bridges enrollment or the Form 2901;
 - H. Process all documented staff educational credit for record keeping purposes. This may include college course documentation or other external learning opportunities completed outside CWEP or the Division;
 - I. Enter course completion history for each employee into Bridges;
 - J. Record expenses for travel, room and board, fees, and instructor costs for each participant, and for each course;
 - K. Upon hiring of a new DCYF staff member, track the Practice Advisor assignments. Ensure all Practice Advisors have formal training; and
 - L. Compile routine and special reports for the Department, DCYF, State, and Federal purposes.
- VII. SYSC, State Office, Central Intake, and each Itinerant or District Office must:
- A. Post and disseminate learning opportunity announcements;
 - B. Establish procedures for ensuring that announcements and access to the CWEP website is available to all staff;
 - C. Forward all learning opportunity/professional development announcements from other organizations to the CWEP for distribution; and
 - D. Make every effort to assist staff to attend and complete learning opportunities.
- VIII. The Instructor must:
- A. Notify CWEP of any audio-visual equipment needs at least five (5) business days prior to the date of the session;
 - B. Deliver the curriculum;

- C. Assist with completion and submittal of attendance records and other procedural forms through CWEP;
 - D. Provide the CWEP with a complete set of course materials to be used at least five (5) business days prior to the date of the session;
 - E. Assume responsibility for securing copyright permission as applicable with CWEP assistance; and
 - F. Be involved in developing competency-based learning opportunities and provide a tool to measure the transfer of learning with CWEP assistance.
- IX. The Supervisor must:
- A. Assign a trained Practice Advisor to a new worker upon hiring;
 - B. Review the Bridges enrollment request or Form 2901, and recommend approval or denial; and
 - C. Sign and forward, if approved, Form 2901 to the CWEP.

Practice Guidance

Where can I find learning opportunities to meet my ongoing learning requirements?

- The Child Welfare Education Partnership plans ongoing learning opportunities to come to each District Office, as well online course offerings available in the State Moodle instance. Courses can be viewed using this link, or by speaking with your CWEP representative for courses specific to your District Office needs. A calendar for upcoming opportunities can be found using this link <https://lms.nh.gov/dhhs/dcyf/>.